

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #29

The purpose of this news release is to announce a fishery targeting VFDA enhanced pink salmon, and to provide an update on VFDA cost recovery fishing progress. All other fishing periods remain as previously announced.

SEINE FISHERIES: VFDA began its pink salmon cost recovery fishing program on Thursday, June 20. VFDA has collected approximately 59% of the assigned pink salmon revenue goal through July 1. VFDA reports that pink salmon harvest on Monday, July 1 was approximately 204,000 fish with an average weight of approximately 2.9 pounds per fish and 15% female for fish harvested at the head of the Port. The updated CPF harvest estimate from the 14-hour period in the Eastern District on Sunday, June 30 is 9 king, 1,050 sockeye, 74 coho, 1.77 million pink, and 5,100 chum salmon with 185 deliveries reported. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from Valdez Arm on June 30 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 24% female. Time and area for the next commercial fishing period will be based on cost recovery progress and harvest results from the July 3 fishery. It is anticipated that there will be an announcement on Thursday, July 4 providing an update on cost recovery fishing progress and preliminary results from Wednesday's fishery.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Wednesday, July 3. **Waters in Port Valdez east of a line from 61° 05.00' N, 146° 21.50' W to 61° 06.00' N, 146° 21.50' W and south of a line from 61° 06.00' N, 146° 21.50' W to 61° 06.00' N, 146° 15.10' W. will be closed during this period.** All waters of the Valdez small boat harbor and within 50 yards of the entrance to the harbor will be closed to commercial fishing. Waters within 200 yards of the AMHS Valdez Ferry Terminal will also be closed to commercial fishing when the ferry is arriving and departing. Anadromous stream closures south of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will be in effect. Anadromous stream closures and regulatory closed waters north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will not be in effect. **Waters inside of all Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers will be closed to commercial fishing during this period to ensure early season escapement. Waters inside of Eastern District SHTF markers closed to commercial fishing during this period include:**

- (1) **Sheep Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°41.13' N. lat., 145°58.87' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°40.46' N. lat., 145°58.01' W. long.;
- (2) **Beartrap Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°45.13' N. lat., 146°06.12' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°44.51' N. lat., 146°04.57' W. long.;
- (3) **Olsen Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°43.46' N. lat., 146°10.14' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°43.21' N. lat., 146°13.97' W. long.;
- (4) **St. Matthews Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°43.36' N. lat., 146°19.07' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°43.61' N. lat., 146°21.17' W. long.;
- (5) **Irish Cove:** south of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°46.73' N. lat., 146°26.62' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°46.27' N. lat., 146°27.12' W. long.;
- (6) **Landlocked Bay:** waters north of 60°50.76' N. lat.;
- (7) **Port Fidalgo Subdistrict:** waters east of 146°24.12' W. long.;
- (8) **Galena Bay:** east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°56.87' N. lat., 146°39.87' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°56.55' N. lat., 146°39.65' W. long.;
- (9) **Jack Bay:** south and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 61°02.34' N. lat., 146°35.27' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 61°02.17' N. lat., 146°39.77' W. long.;
- (10) **Sawmill Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 61°02.71' N. lat., 146°46.44' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 61°02.58' N. lat., 146°47.07' W. long.

SHTF marker coordinates are available in the Cordova ADF&G office, and have been provided to area processors, VFDA and PWSAC for distribution to fishery participants.

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Wednesday, July 3. The Southeastern District harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Sunday, June 30 is confidential.

Please refer to Prince William Sound News Release #26 from Thursday, June 27 for details regarding Prince William Sound anadromous stream closures. Electronic copies of the list and associated map detailing these updated regulatory closed waters are available at the following web address under the Prince William Sound Anadromous Waters Closures heading:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.salmon#/maps>

Copies of the list and map are also available in the Cordova ADF&G office.

Please refer to the ADF&G 2012-2015 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound booklet for regulations regarding commercial salmon fisheries in the Prince William Sound Area. This booklet is available in the Cordova ADF&G office and at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/fishregulations/pdfs/commercial/PWSSalmon-2012-2015.pdf>

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Wednesday, July 3.

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." 16 U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an "intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.